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Listen to the Cowboy Kid Coast-to-Coast on the Mutual Network!



BOBBY BENSON'S

No. 2

B-BAR-B RIDERS

10¢





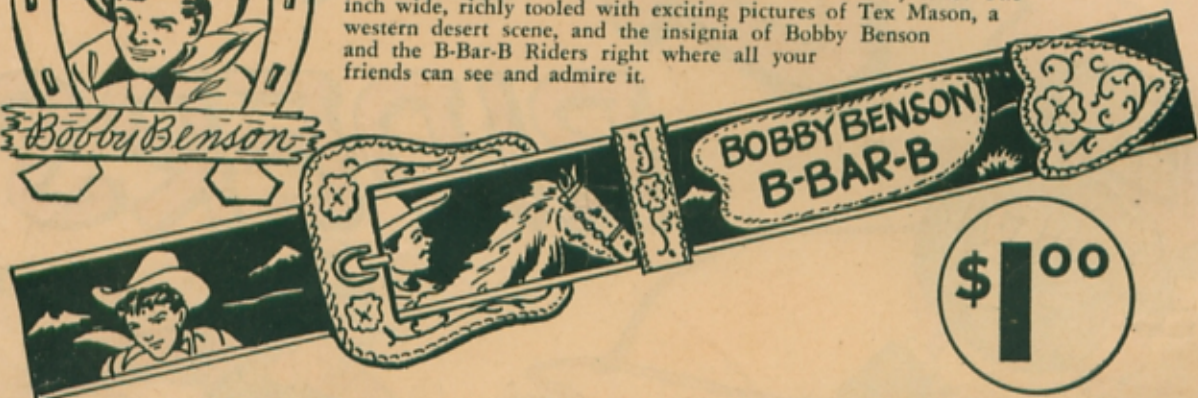
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GEE WHIZ! JUST LOOK AT THIS BOBBY BENSON

WESTERN COWHIDE BELT



HEY, FELLERS! Here's your chance to get a genuine steerhide deep-tooled cowboy belt—just the kind of belt the B-BAR-B Riders would like to see you wear! And what a beauty it is! One inch wide, richly tooled with exciting pictures of Tex Mason, a western desert scene, and the insignia of Bobby Benson and the B-Bar-B Riders right where all your friends can see and admire it.



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AND HOW ABOUT THESE RIP SNORTIN' "YOUR NAME-ON-IT" GUN & HOLSTER SETS



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Just pick any item(s) you want, fill out the coupon and mail it to us. When the postman delivers your Bobby Benson Belt or Purple Sage Gun & Holster Sets, pay him the prices indicated, plus postage and handling charges. Then, if you're not thrilled with your purchase, return it to us within 10 days—and we'll send your money back. You'd have to roam far and wide before you could round up real bargains like these—so don't delay! Real cowboys act fast! Mail coupon NOW.

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Rush me the item(s) I have indicated below. On arrival, I will pay postman the prices indicated, plus postage and handling charges. If not thrilled with my purchase, I may return it within 10 days and you will send my money back.

- ☐ **BOBBY BENSON WESTERN BELT** ☐ **SIZE** \$1.00
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Put the following first name on my Purple Sage Holster-Belt.
CASH must accompany order in this case. No C.O.D.

(No more than six letters.)

Name
Address
City Zone State

☐ Check here if you enclose money with coupon. WE pay all postage and handling charges. Same money-back guarantee.



BOBBY BENSON'S

B-BAR-B RIDERS



ONE DAY, AS BOBBY BENSON AND HIS FOREMAN, TEX MASON, WERE MAKING SOME PURCHASES IN THE TOWN'S GENERAL STORE...

GOLLY, TEX—I COULD REALLY USE A NEW LASSO LIKE THIS ONE!

AWRIGHT, KID—YA READY? I KEEP 'EM COVERED WHILE YA SCOOP THE CASH! SCARED?

I AIN'T SCARED O' NUTTIN'! G'WAN AHEAD!

MICKY O'HARA WAS JUST THE SAME AGE AS BOBBY BENSON, THE YOUTHFUL OWNER OF THE B-BAR-B RANCH. YET MICKY WAS AS ROUGH AND AS TOUGH AS A GAT-HAPPY GANGSTER. "I TRAVEL ALONE—GET IT?" HE SAID. HE'D JUST AS SOON ROB AS EAT. HE HAD NO FRIENDS—HE DIDN'T WANT ANY. WAS THERE—SOMEWHERE—A SINGLE SPOT OF GOOD IN MICKY O'HARA? OR WAS HE ALL BAD... A BOY KILLER?

AWRIGHT, HAYSEEDS—REACH! THIS IS A HOLDUP! DON'T ANYBODY MOVE!

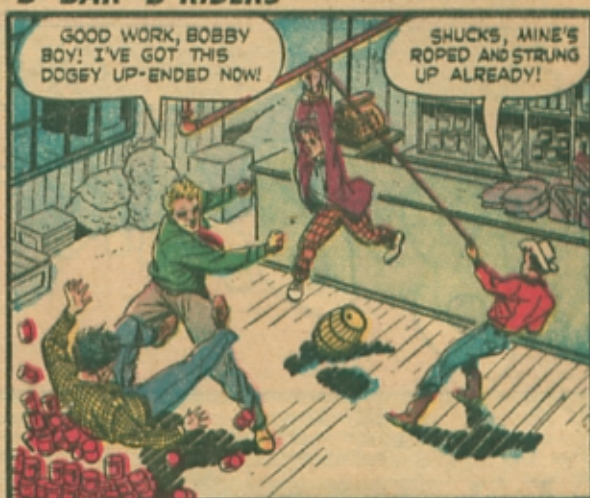
WELL, I'LL BE—!

BETTER GO BACK EAST AND LEARN HOW TO HANDLE A GUN, STRANGER!

YIPE! HEY, KID—GIMME A HAND! DON'T STAND THERE WITH YER TEETH IN YER MOUTH!



BOBBY BENSON'S B-BAR-B RIDERS

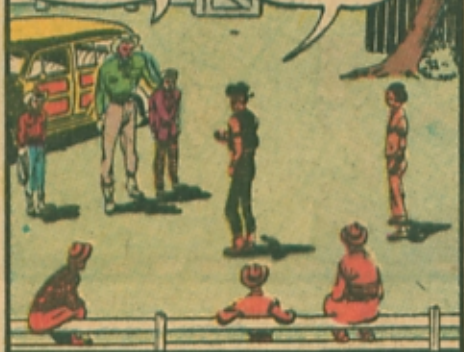


BOBBY BENSON'S B-BAR-B RIDERS

SO THAT'S HOW MICKY O'HARA CAME TO THE B-BAR-B RANCH!

MEN, THIS IS MICKY. MICKY HASN'T GOT ANY FOLKS—SO HE'S GOING TO STAY WITH US FOR A WHILE. YOU'LL SLEEP IN THE BUNK HOUSE WITH THE BOYS. MICKY.

SINCE I'M THUM SPEECHMAKER ROUND THESE PARTS, LEMME EXTEND THUM HAND UV WELCOME TUH YUH, MICKY BOY. SHAKE!



AGHHH, DON'T BOTHER ME SUCKER.



BY GUM, EF HE WUZ JUST TEN YEARS OLDER, I'D—
I'D—
SPLUT—
SPLUTTER!

GOLLY, TEX—THIS ISN'T GOING TO BE EASY!



BUT BOBBY DIDN'T KNOW JUST HOW RIGHT HE WAS. TAMING MICKY CERTAINLY WAS NO EASY JOB.

DAD NAB IT! CORN-FLAKES IN MUH BUNK TONIGHT!

IN MINE, TOO!

SOMEBODY'S GOING TO GET SASSY, HEAD RATTLED, BUT GOOD!



NOTHING SEEMED TO INTEREST MICKY...

FUN? RIDIN' THEM PLUGS?

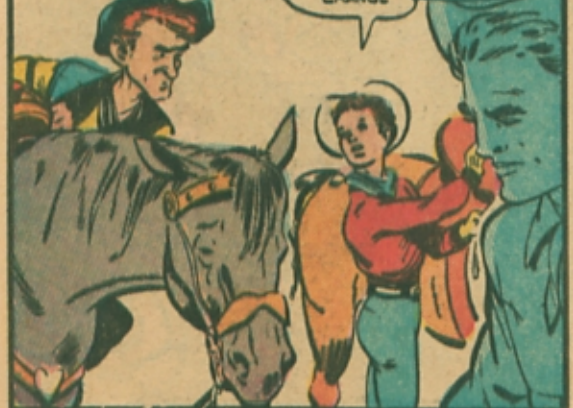
C'MON, MICKY—I SADDLED UP A SWELL LITTLE PAINT FOR YOU. WE'RE RIDIN' OUT TO THE EAST RANGE TO LOOK AT THE HERD. C'MON ALONG FOR SOME FUN, HUM?

WHY DON'T YOU GUYS STOP PLAYIN' COWBOY AN' GROW UP? STAY HERE, LITTLE LORD FAUNTLEROY, AN' HAVE A GAME O' STUD POKER WITH ME—THAT'S FUN!



DAWGONIT WHY DON'T YUH GIVE IT UP BOBBY—THEY MAVERICK'S JEST ALL BAD!

GOLLY, WINDY—NOBODY'S ALL BAD! I JUST SORT OF FEEL THAT SOMETHING'S GOING TO HAPPEN—AND THEN MICKY'LL CHANGE.



SOMETHIN' HAPPENED, ALL RIGHT... WHOA, MABEL! MABEL DARLIN'!... NOW, WHUT IN TARNATION'S GOT INTUM HER? ...HEY!

WHOA, MABEL! SHE'S NEVER DONE ANYTHING LIKE THAT BEFORE...



BOBBY BENSON'S B-BAR-B RIDERS



BOBBY BENSON'S B-BAR-B RIDERS



BOBBY BENSON'S B-BAR-B RIDERS

AND EVERYTHING WAS DIFFERENT! FOR THE NEXT SEVERAL WEEKS...

NO, MICKY—LEAN BACK! LET THE HORSE THROW YOU UP—AND COME DOWN SOFT IN THE SADDLE EVERY OTHER BOUNCE NOW. COME ON—POST!

HEELS LOWER THAN YOUR TOES, MICKY! KEEP YOUR FEET UNDER YOU NOW—DON'T PUSH 'EM FORWARD!

HOW'S THIS? I GOTCHA, ME BUCKAROO!

SO, YOU MUST STEP MORE QUICKLY—ALL IN ONE MOVEMENT—LIKE THAT! NOW, QUICK! STEP IN, PULL, AND BEND AT THE SAME TIME—PULL! GOOD! INDIANS CALL THAT TRICK THE MABI!

HEY, GUYS—FEEL THAT MUSCLE! GOSH, JUST FEEL IT! WOW—THIS IS TH' LIFE!



THIS IS WEST LOOKOUT, MICKY—ISN'T IT SOMETHING? WE'LL MAKE THIS *OUR* SPOT. WE'LL COME HERE EVERY DAY AND TALK AND WATCH THE SUN GO DOWN!

IT JIST SORTA TAKES YER BREATH AWAY, IT'S THAT PERTY! THIS IS OUR SPOT AW-RIGHT, PAL—JIST FER YOU AN' ME...



...AN' ANY TIME EITHER OF US GITS INTO TROUBLE OR SOMEVIN', HE'LL JIST COME RIGHT HERE AN' WAIT. WHATEVER HAPPENS—WE'LL ALWAYS MEET HERE. RIGHT?

RIGHT! LET'S HAVE OUR SECRET HANDSHAKE ON THAT!



NEXT DAY...

I JIST HAD T'GIT OFF BY MYSELF FER A MINUTE AN' THINK! GEE, THOSE GUYS ARE JIST WUNNERFUL TIME. BOBBY'S THE BEST PAL I EVER HAD! BUT—WHY? WHAT'S IT ALL MEAN? WHERE DOES MICKEY O'HARA GO FROM HERE?



HI YA, KID!

HOTSHOT!



BOBBY BENSON'S B-BAR-B RIDERS



BOBBY BENSON'S B-BAR-B RIDERS



BOBBY BENSON'S B-BAR-B RIDERS

MICKY, HIS EYES FILLED WITH TEARS AND CLOUDED WITH FEAR, DUCKING BULLETS, NEVER SAW THE ROCK IN HIS PATH...

UGH! SOB!

GOTCHA! WHY, YOU DIRTY LITTLE DOUBLE-CROSSER—I'M REALLY GONNA PLUG YOU NOW! YOU AIN'T NO USE TO ME AT ALL!

HERE GOES, YOU NO-GOOD LITTLE...WHAT THE?...HORSES!

MICKY! MICKY! HOLD ON—WE'RE COMING!

DROP THAT BOY, YOU SKUNK!

I AIN'T DROPPIN' NO-BODY, COWBOY! NOW CLEAR AWAY—ONE MOVE OUTTA YOU AN' I PLUG THIS KID!

MABI! MICKY, DO YOU HEAR ME? MABI!

GOOD BOY—HE REMEMBER INDIAN WRESTLING TRICK!

I HEAR YOU, BOBBY! MABI!

MY TURN NEXT, TEX—WHEN HE COME DOWN!

(SOB) I ALMOST WENT THROUGH WITH IT, BOBBY! (SOB!) I ALMOST RATTED ON YA! HE BLACKMAILED ME... HE WAS GONNA TELL MY SECRET! BUT I DON'T CARE NOW—I'LL TELL IT MYSELF!

I LIED WHEN I SAID I WAS AN ORPHAN. I GOT FOLKS—BUT I RAN AWAY FROM HOME 'CAUSE THEY WERE POOR AN' COULDN'T GIVE ME NUTTIN'. I WAS ASHAMED TO GO BACK AN' ADMIT I WAS WRONG, BUT NOW...

...NOW I KNOW I GOT TO GO BACK. I GOT TO BE UNSELFISH, LIKE YOU. I GOT TO HELP MY FOLKS LIKE YOU HELPED ME—THAT'S MY JOB! AN' SOME DAY, WHEN I'M A MAN AN' MY JOB'S DONE, I'M COMIN' BACK T'RIDE FER THE B-BAR-B—IF Y'ALL HAVE ME!

GOLLY, MICKY—THERE'LL ALWAYS BE A BUNK FOR YOU. AREN'T WE BUDDIES FOR LIFE?

WINDY WALES



ALL HIS LIFE, WINDY WALES WAITED FOR A CHANCE TO SING AND ACT FOR THE MOVIES. BUT—WHEN HE GOT HIS BIG CHANCE—(SO HE THOUGHT!)—THINGS TURNED OUT TO BE EVEN MORE EXCITING AND DANGEROUS THAN HE BARGAINED FOR! ACTUALLY HE WAS IN DANGER OF LOSING HIS LIFE, BUT HE THOUGHT HE WAS "WINDY WALES, SINGING STAR OF THE MOVIES!"



I SAID I'D GIT YUH, YUH VARMINT—AN' HYAR I BE!

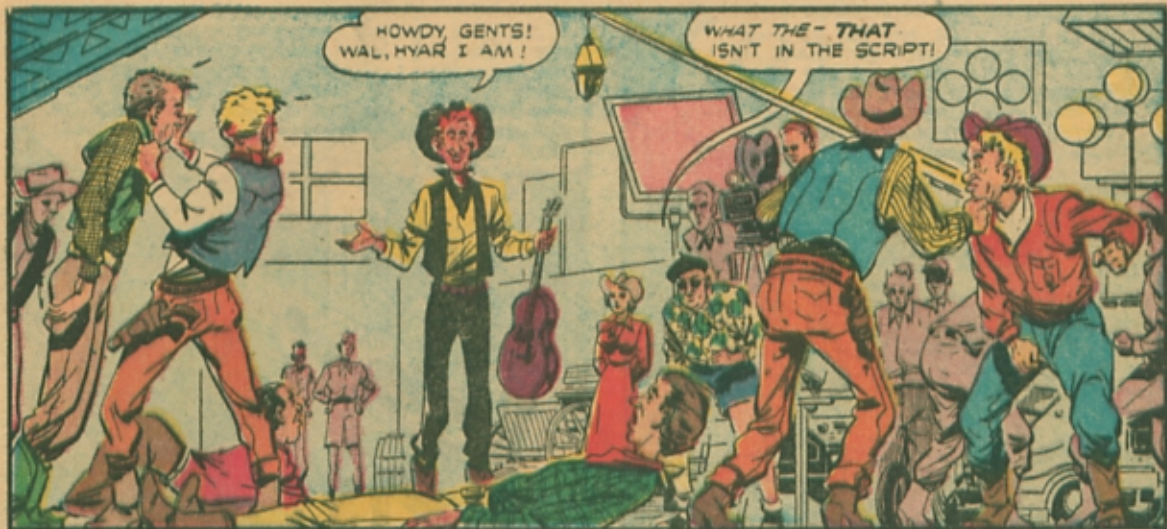


YUH SHOT HIM DOWN LIKE THUH DOG HE IS, TENNESSEE, BUT HE'S OURS, JEST THUH SAME! WE'RE TAKIN' AWAY HIS CORPSE!

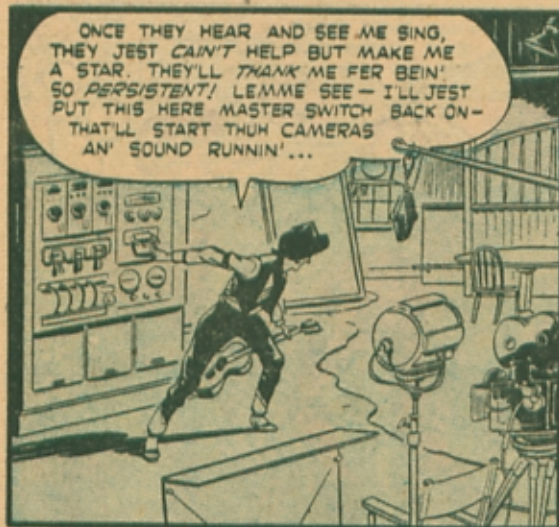
NO, YUH AINT! HE'S OURS! ANYBODY TOUCHES THIS HERE CORPSE IS GONNA GIT HIS HAIR SHOT OFF!



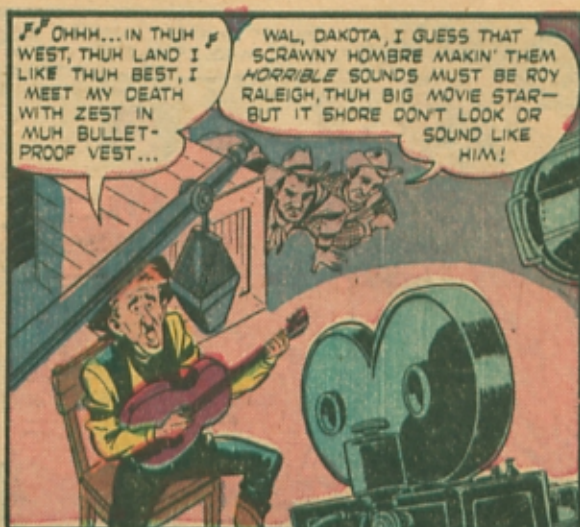
BOBBY BENSON'S B-BAR-B RIDERS



BOBBY BENSON'S B-BAR-B RIDERS



ONCE THEY HEAR AND SEE ME SING, THEY JEST CAN'T HELP BUT MAKE ME A STAR. THEY'LL THANK ME FER BEIN' SO PERSISTENT! LEMME SEE—I'LL JEST PUT THIS HERE MASTER SWITCH BACK ON—THAT'LL START THUH CAMERAS AN' SOUND RUNNIN'...



F OHHH...IN THUH WEST, THUH LAND I LIKE THUH BEST, I MEET MY DEATH WITH ZEST IN MUH BULLET-PROOF VEST...

WAL, DAKOTA, I GUESS THAT SCRAWNY HOMBRE MAKIN' THEM HORRIBLE SOUNDS MUST BE ROY RALEIGH, THUH BIG MOVIE STAR—BUT IT SHORE DON'T LOOK OR SOUND LIKE HIM!



CAN'T TELL, CHEROKEE. THEY MUST DUB IN SOMEBODY ELSE'S SINGIN' AN' FIX THET GEEZER UP WITH MAKEUP. IT SHORE IS A WONDER WHUT MAKEUP KIN DO FER A MOVIE STAR. ANYWAY HE'S THUH ONLY ONE AROUND WITH A GEE-TAR!

AN' HE'S ALL ALONE, PRACTICIN'! LET'S GRAB HIM NOW, BOY, THE MOVIE COMPANY WILL PAY A FORTUNE IN RANSOM TUH GIT HIM BACK!



ALL RIGHT, ROY—C'MON ALONG WITH US! AN' STOP THET YELPIN'! WE'RE TAKIN' YUH FER RANSOM, SEE! ONE PEEP OUTA YUH AN' YUH GIT PLUGGED FER SHORE!

ROY? RANSOM? WHUT THUH—WAL, I'LL BE DOGGONED! THEY'RE GIVIN' ME A REAL CHANCE TUH ACT, THIS MUST BE A AUDITION! MUSTA HEARD MY SINGIN', ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT!



REACH FER THUH SKY, YUH VARMINTS! NOBODY GITS THUH DROP ON ME! BAM! BAM! THAR, NOW—SHOT THUH IRONS RIGHT OUTA YORE CLUMSY HANDS!



NOW, DOGGONIT, WHYN'T YOU BIRDS REACH FER THE SKY, LIKE I SAID.... GNNNGG!



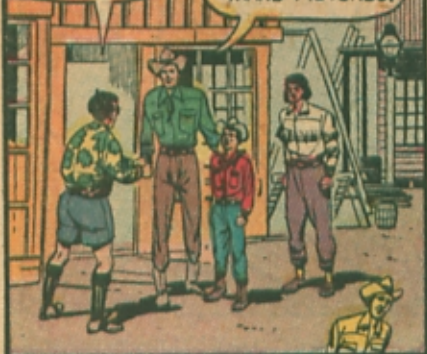
ACTORS SHORE ARE NUTS, ALL RIGHT! C'MON, LET'S GIT THUH OUR HIDEOUT IN CYCLONE CANYON... WE'RE IN LUCK—NOBODY SAW US COMIN' OR LEAVIN'!

BOBBY BENSON'S B-BAR-B RIDERS

SOME TIME LATER...

TEX MASON! I'M SURE GLAD TO SEE YOU! WHY, IT'S BEEN ALMOST FIFTEEN YEARS SINCE WE WERE TOGETHER IN COLLEGE!

YES, IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME. I'D LIKE YOU TO MEET MY BOSS, BOBBY BENSON. AND THIS IS HARKA. THEY'RE REAL ANXIOUS TO SEE HOW YOU MAKE PICTURES.



WELL, YOU'RE JUST IN TIME TO SEE THE "RUSHES" ON WHAT WE'VE DONE TODAY. YOU SEE, WE DEVELOP ALL FILM RIGHT AFTER IT'S TAKEN. IT'S ALL DONE HERE IN OUR MOBILE LAB.



THE FILM WAS TAKEN OUT OF THE CAMERA ONLY AN HOUR AGO, BUT YOU'LL BE ABLE TO SEE AND HEAR IT ON THIS VIEWER. ASSISTANT! LIGHTS OUT, PLEASE! TURN ON THE VIEWING MACHINE!



THAT HICK AGAIN! RUINED! I'M RUINED!

WHY, IT'S WINDY! NOW WHAT IN THE WORLD—?

WAIT, WHO IS THAT WHO COMES BEHIND OUR FRIEND?



...LET'S GIT TUN OUR HIDEOUT IN CYCLONE CANYON...

I NEVER SAW THOSE TWO GUYS BEFORE. THEY'RE NO ACTORS OF MINE! TEX—THAT LOOKED LIKE THE REAL THING!

THEY MUST HAVE THOUGHT HE WAS ROY RALIEGH! RAN-SOM! LET'S GO, BOYS! ...WHO'S GOT A GUN AROUND HERE?



THEY SAID THEY WERE GOING TO A HIDEOUT IN CYCLONE CANYON—IT'S LUCKY THE SOUND WAS ON!

HERE, TEX—HERE'S MY SHOT-GUN! IT'S THE ONLY WEAPON AROUND HERE THAT'S ANY GOOD—ALL THE OTHERS ARE LOADED WITH BLANKS.

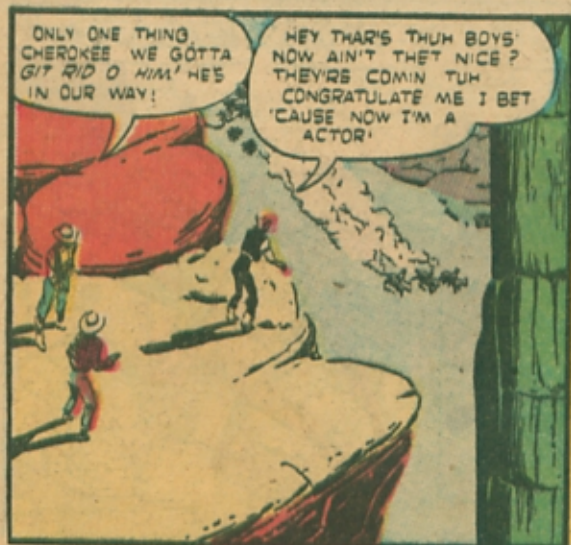


WE'RE HANDICAPPED WITH JUST ONE GUN—BUT LET'S GO!

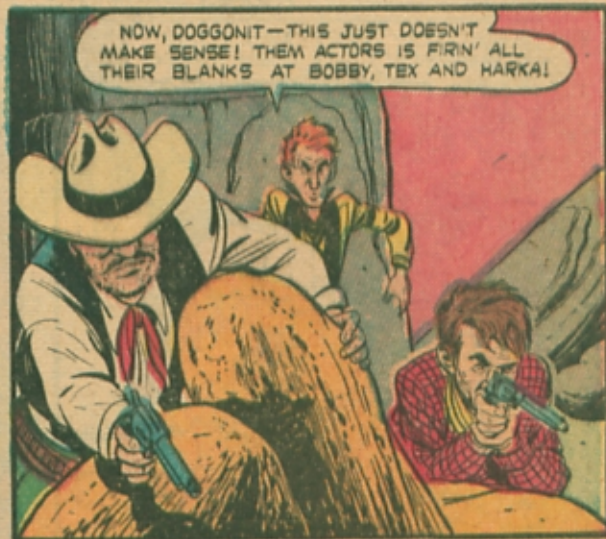
LET'S RIDE! B-BAR-BE-EEEE!



BOBBY BENSON'S B-BAR-B RIDERS



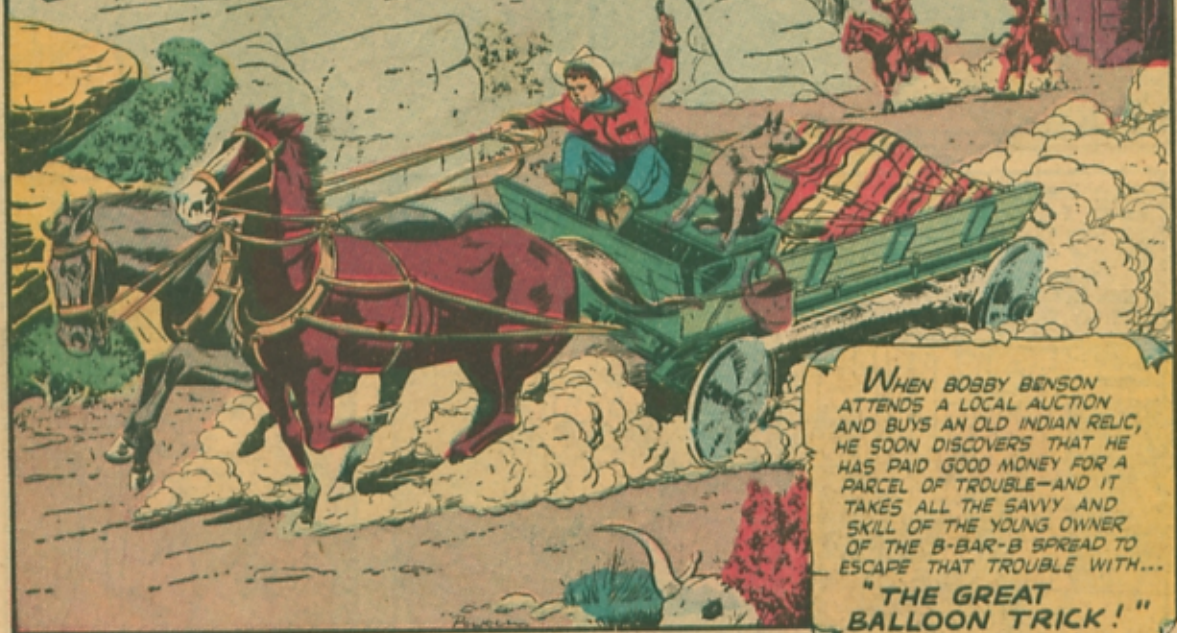
BOBBY BENSON'S B-BAR-B RIDERS



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BOBBY BENSON'S B-BAR-B RIDERS



When Bobby Benson attends a local auction and buys an old Indian relic, he soon discovers that he has paid good money for a parcel of trouble—and it takes all the savvy and skill of the young owner of the B-Bar-B spread to escape that trouble with...

"THE GREAT BALLOON TRICK!"



HOW YOU COMING ON THOSE WEATHER PREDICTION EXPERIMENTS, BOBBY?

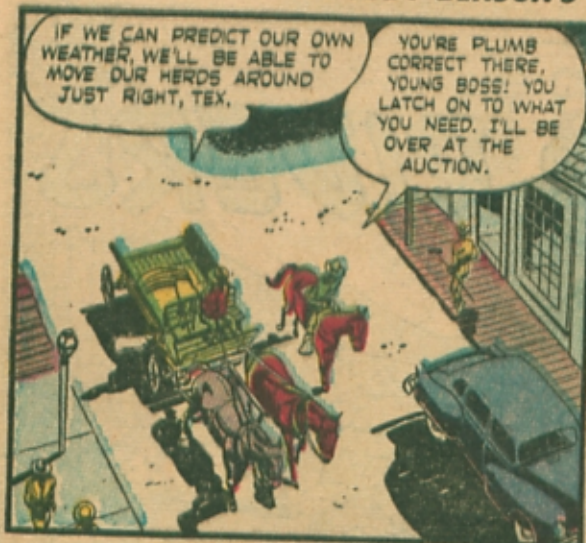
NOT SO GOOD, TEX! RECKON I HAVE TO USE **BALLOONS**, JUST THE WAY WEATHER BUREAUS DO!



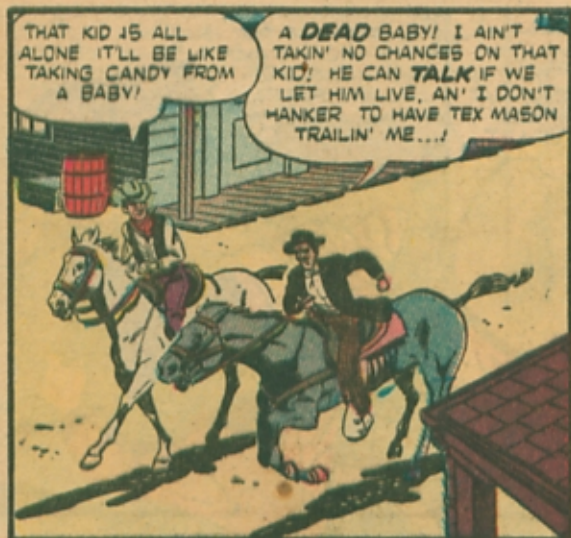
YOU CAN PICK UP WHAT YOU NEED IN TOWN, THEN. I WANT TO ATTEND THE OLD PICKAXE AUCTION. WE NEED SOME EQUIPMENT, AND I FIGURE TO GET IT REAL CHEAP.

SWELL, TEX! I'LL GET MY THINGS AT THE SAME TIME...

BOBBY BENSON'S B-BAR-B RIDERS



BOBBY BENSON'S B-BAR-B RIDERS



HIDDEN BY PRAIRIE SAND, A JUTTING HUMP OF SANDSTONE JOGS THE BUCKBOARD WHEELS—AND BOBBY IS THROWN TO ONE SIDE JUST AS THE CLEAR, HIGH WHINE OF A WINCHESTER 44 BULLET WHISTLES PAST HIM..



GULPE TWO MEN—SHOOTING AT ME! BUT WHY? I NEVER SAW THEM BEFORE! WHAT DO THEY WANT WITH ME?



AT A KILLING PACE, BOBBY RAMRODS HIS HORSES ACROSS THE BAGE FLATS, HEADING FOR THE SERRATED SANDSTONE BLUFFS OF RATTLESNAKE CANYON.



THEY AREN'T AT THE CANYON ENTRANCE YET! I STILL HAVE A CHANCE...!



BUT NOT MUCH OF A CHANCE! I ONLY HAVE SIX BULLETS!



BOBBY BENSON'S B-BAR-B RIDERS



BOBBY BENSON'S B-BAR-B RIDERS



HERO...GO HOME! GO GET TEX, HERO! I ONLY HAVE THREE BULLETS LEFT! AND WHEN I DON'T HAVE ANY MORE BULLETS LEFT... THOSE GUN-SUCKS WILL... GUN ME DOWN IN COLD BLOOD!

WITH A SNARL, THE BIG DOG, HERO, LOPES ACROSS THE CANYON FLOOR AND LEAPS HIGH ABOVE A SANDSTONE LEDGE. A DOG CAN GO WHERE A MAN CAN'T, AND HERO IS ON HIS WAY TO THE B-BAR-B...



THAT DOGGONE DOG! I'LL BRING HIM DOWN...

LET HIM GO, YUH FOOL! THE DOG CAN'T TALK!



MAYBE THEY'LL KILL ME... BUT THEY AREN'T GOING TO GET THIS COUP STICK! MY WEATHER BALLOON IS BIG ENOUGH TO LIFT IT....



WITH TREMBLING FINGERS, BOBBY INFLATES THE WEATHER BALLOON, OR "RADIOSONDE", AS IT IS KNOWN, FROM THE BIG CYLINDER OF HELIUM GAS...

THESE BALLOONS CAN LIFT ABOUT TWENTY POUNDS, SO IT'LL LIFT THE STICK, EVEN WITH THOSE GOLD COINS IN IT...



HEY -LOOK!

A BALLOON - WITH OUR COUP STICK HANGIN' FROM IT! THUNDERATION! ONCE THE WIND GETS A HOLD OF THAT, WE'LL NEVER SEE IT AGAIN....



BOBBY FORGOTTEN, THE GUNMEN RACE ACROSS THE ROUGH, ROCKY GROUND, SIXGUNS BLASTING...

HIT IT! HIT IT! THAT'LL LET THE GAS ESCAPE AN' IT'LL FALL!

EASY TO SAY IT... BUT THE WIND IS WIGGLIN' AN WAGGLIN' EVERY WHICH WAY....



WELL, THEY WENT OFF CHASING IT! IT SAVED MY LIFE ANYHOW. BUT THAT COUP STICK BELONGED TO ME! I BOUGHT IT AT THE AUCTION SALE. NOW I'LL NEVER GET IT. THEY WILL!

BOBBY BENSON'S B-BAR-B RIDERS



HIDDEN BY THE RED LAVA ROCKS, BOBBY HALTS HIS WAGON AND INFLATES FOUR OF HIS WEATHER BALLOONS...



BOBBY BENSON'S B-BAR-B RIDERS



BOBBY MAKES A RUNNING JUMP AND LEAPS HIGH INTO THE AIR. AND THE HELIUM-FILLED BALLOONS LIFT HIM HIGHER AND HIGHER...

WHAT WITH MY JUMP AND THE LIFTING POWER OF THESE BALLOONS, I THINK I'M GOING TO MAKE IT!

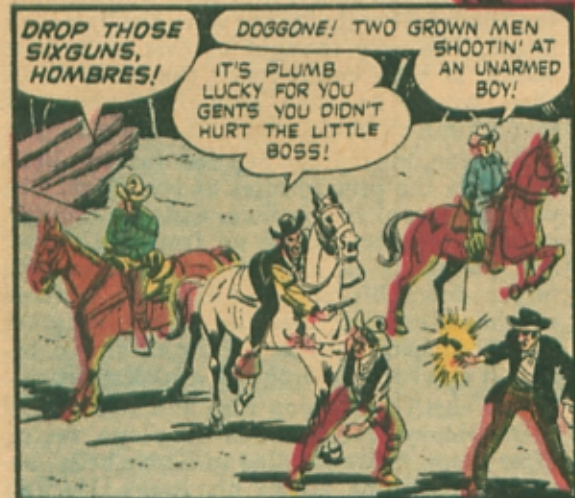


NOW THAT I HAVE THE STICK—HOW AM I GOING TO GET DOWN?



LOOK! THE BOY! HOW IN TARNATION DID HE GET UP THERE?

NEVER MIND **PUZZLES!** TELL HIM TO THROW DOWN THAT STICK—OR WE OPEN UP ON HIM!



DROP THOSE SIXGUNS, HOMBRES!

DOGGONE! TWO GROWN MEN SHOOTIN' AT AN UNARMED BOY!
IT'S PLUMB LUCKY FOR YOU GENTS YOU DIDN'T HURT THE LITTLE BOSS!



JUST AS SOON AS IRISH AND WINDY GET BOBBY DOWN, YOU BOYS AND I ARE GOING TO TANGLE WITH **BARE FISTS!**



AND SO, SOME MINUTES LATER...

SHOOT AT A **BOY!** WILL YOU?



AFTER THE GUNMEN HAVE BEEN TAKEN OFF TO JAIL...

YIPES! THESE ARE 1863 GOLD COINS—WORTH MORE THAN A THOUSAND DOLLARS EACH! I'M KEEPING ONE AS A SOUVENIR—AND GIVING THE REST TO A MUSEUM!

TWENTY THOUSAND DOLLARS! NO WONDER THOSE COYOTES WANTED IT SO BADLY! OLD MAN TATE MUST HAVE BEEN HOARDING THEM AGAINST A RAINY DAY! ONE OF THOSE GUN-SLICKS USED TO WORK FOR HIM. THAT'S HOW HE KNEW THE COINS WERE IN THE COUP STICK...!

MOUNTAIN AMBUSH

THE BLACKFEET were all around them, hidden by the aspens and the rocks that humped up like the backs of half-buried animals. Here and there, young Kim Hunter saw the flash of a buckskin shirt, the brief copper gleam of a naked back. Beside him, grim old Marc Boucher spat a stream of dark brown tobacco juice at a crawling bug. His hard, lined face told Kim the truth: they were done for.

Kim and old Marc had cut free of the main camp, only two days ago. They had come into the Rockies with a party of twenty-six mountain men, out to test their trapping skill and their marksmanship with the long rifles against the grizzly b'ar and lesser game. It was early spring, 1843, and they were the first white men in this spur of the mountains.

"The first," muttered Kim nervously, watching a Blackfoot brave duck down behind a rock three hundred yards away, "—and the last!"

Boucher grunted. "If there was some chance of gettin' to water, boy..." He broke off as an arrow came lofting upward from a clump of evergreens, the sharp *taaaang* of the gut bowstring sharp in the morning air. The Frenchman rolled to one side, and the arrow buried its head inches deep in the soft loam.

"Water? What good would *that* do? We can't fight those Injuns with water!"

"Mebbe not," admitted the old mountain man, "but it'd be a help."

Kim was sliding his long rifle forward across his buckskin-clad arm so that it would make no noise. Less than two hundred yards away, a daring Blackfoot was crawling between rock boulders, his half-naked body flat to the ground so that he looked like a huge, red-brown snake. Now Kim's hand was clamped under the wooden barrel-guard, and his cheek was pressed to the cool stock.

His eyes held the Blackfeet in the sight even as his trigger finger tensed, slowly drawing the trigger inward. *Gently*, he told himself. *Just press that trigger. Don't pull at it...*

The rifle cracked. Far down the slope the crawling Indian half rose to his feet, stood there a moment, bent over, rigid. Then he fell forward, face downward, limp.

Boucher spat more tobacco juice. He grunted, "Good shot. But look yonder, boy. Tell me what you see."

Kim followed the mountain man's straight finger, caught sight of a thin silver needle of light between the branches of a dwarf pinon

and a red sandstone rock. He stared, shook his head, then looked again.

"It's water, Marc. Water! Probably a little stream."

"We don't need a river," the Frenchman said. His black eyes darted here and there. He was gathering the muscles of his whipcord-and-bone body together.

"When I whoop, you *run*, lad! Follow me! If you get a chance, shoot at the varmints! Let's... go! *Allez!*"

It was madness, Kim knew — but a sort of madness that might be its own protection. For, alone, cut off from the main camp, it was only a matter of time until the Blackfeet sank their feathered shafts into their bodies, until the Blackfoot scalp knives were circling their heads. The very thought of that made Kim wince. If they could reach the main camp, they would be safe enough. Twenty-six mountain men could stand off a whole tribe.

Kim ran, his moccasined feet making little sound on the pine needles of the slope. The wind was cool in his face, and the thought of the Blackfeet lifting up from the timber and the rocks all around them sent a cold finger down his spine. An arrow whirled overhead, missing them by a foot. Another shaft touched Boucher's fringed sleeve before it clanked and broke on a rock nearby.

The shrill warwhoop rose and fell behind them. Heavy feet pounded the slope, racing after them. A fire kindled in Kim's belly, began to burn the air in his lungs. He felt heady, almost dizzy. Knots of pain cramped at his legs.

Now they were on the flat, moving swiftly. For all his youth, Kim saw that the old Frenchman was keeping pace with him. Nothing ever tired Boucher. They flashed by a lightning-blasted tree-trunk, and Kim staggered.

"Soon now," panted the mountain man, "you will get the second wind!"

It came, that wonderful ability that men called their second wind. Now the cramps of pain were gone. Kim's lungs lifted and fell easily. He felt he could run forever.

The little creek came up from the ground as they topped a rise. It lay glinting brightly in the sun. With a whoop, Boucher leaped for it, jumped for its cold waters. Kim followed.

The mountain man was stripping himself, jerking his buckskin jacket off, dunking it in the creek-water, soaking it thoroughly. His

BOBBY BENSON'S B-BAR-B RIDERS

black eyes glittered. He growled at Kim. "Do like I do! Soak the buckskin! Go on! *Peste*, boy! Hurry! Water-soaked buckskin will stop an Injun arrow every time — 'cept for a direct, headon shot, powered from close up!"

It was more mountain lore that he was absorbing, Kim knew, as he bared his chest and back and plunged his white buckskin shirt into the stream. *Although*, he thought with a wry smile, *it won't do me much good, if those Blackfeet catch me!*

The wet buckskin weighed a ton. It clung to their bodies and made running difficult as they went up the far bank. But when an arrow thudded between Boucher's shoulder blades and fell back, Kim felt a wash of exultation flooding him. Maybe they could still make the main camp! He forced his leg muscles, numb from the cold water, to longer strides. . . .

Something was wrong. Boucher knew it first as he came to a stop on the crest of a ridge with the wind souging through the pines. He lifted his eyes to the sky. His nostrils widened as he sniffed.

"No smoke," said Kim. "There ought to be smoke in a twenty-six man camp. He knew mountain men had hungry stomachs. The campfires always had a deer or bear-half spitted above them.

Behind them, the Blackfeet were coming. Not as fast as they had. They were taking their time — almost as if they knew the two were finally cornered. And this, Kim knew, bothered the old mountain man most of all. "Tain't natural fer the varmints to slack up. Unless they know for sure we won't get away . . ."

They walked toward the camp. Now they could see the blackened ruin of the campfires, and the charred tents. A huddled heap of what had once been a man lay across a dead campfire. Beyond this man lay others, some with arrows pincushioning their bodies, all of them with raw red circles on their heads where their scalps had been ripped off. Kim felt sick.

They walked in the wreckage of the camp, reading the story. A swift attack at dawn, while the men were still dull with sleep. A volley of arrows whistling in the misty morning air, cutting the men down as they bent over the fires. A swift foray with knife and tomahawk, and the shrill warwhoop curdling the blood. No time to run for the swiftly flowing river less than thirty feet away.

The old mountain man spat. He lifted his eyes toward the ridge. It was rimmed with tall Blackfeet, some clad only in leggings with bearclaw necklaces on their bronze chests, others in white deerskin jackets as well. Here and there a medicine man in horned bonnet shook aloft a medicine stick adorned

with painted feathers and amulets.

Kim said, "Now it's our turn." He was leaning on his long rifle, feeling the cool in the air soak through him and his wet garments as the last of the sun went down beyond the high peaks of the Tetons. The Indians were spreading out, moving casually, disdainfully.

"They won't attack tonight," advised Boucher, watching them. "No Injuns raid at night. But they'll be here at dawn. And so will we! Not even a mouse will get through *that circle!*"

Boucher took off his wet buckskin garments and rubbed himself with his hands. He jumped up and down, restoring circulation. Catching Kim's eyes, he said grimly, "I aim to take plenty of 'em with me. I'll never do that if I sleep cold!"

The night came down, black and moonless. A mist swept in off the gurgling, flowing river where the dead branches and drifting tree-trunks seemed to Kim like dead souls drifting endlessly from this grim land. He stared at the river until it was hidden by the rising mists, and then he furrowed his brows, and thought.

It was hours later that Kim reached out and shook the mountain man gently. Boucher came awake instantly, a hand to his rifle. Kim leaned closer. His lips moved as he whispered. From the encircling Blackfeet, a coyote howled. Boucher grunted his amazement. He sat up, fully alert, now. His lips twisted in a grin.

"Mebbe," he said. "Mebbe it might work, at that. These mists . . . them Blackfeet being doggone sure we'll be here like sitting ducks at dawn . . ."

They went on their bellies, thirty feet to the river's edge. Softly they dragged two tree-trunks from the slime and mud. Kim snapped off two long hollow reeds. He handed one to Boucher. Boucher put one end to his mouth, seized the dead tree-limb with his buckskined legs, and pushed off. He went down into the water without a splash. The trunk swung out into the stream, was caught by the current and moved swiftly, silently, away. Boucher could breathe through that hollow reed. He would not have to come out of the water for hours. By that time they would be far away.

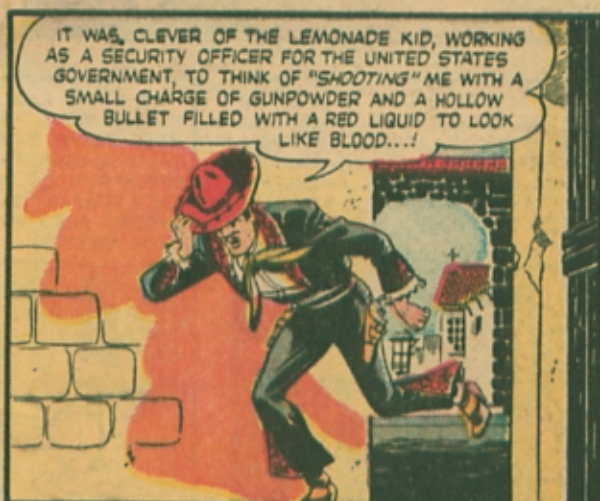
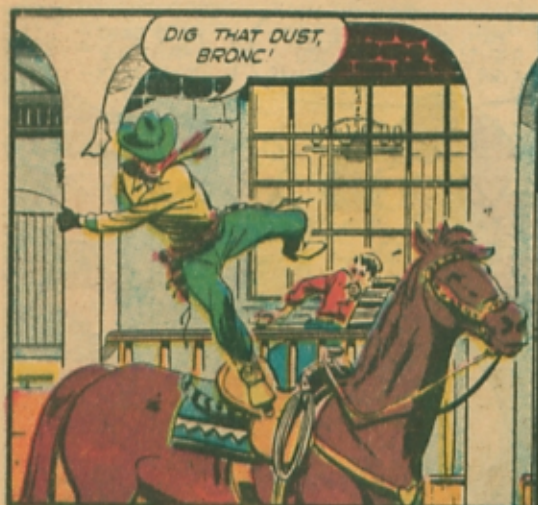
Kim glanced back at the empty camp. He would have liked to be on hand to see the amazement on the faces of the Blackfeet in the dawn. But a man can't have everything! He put himself into the river, and let the current carry him and his tree-trunk far away . . . safely hidden from keen Indian eyes, seeming to be just another dead tree-trunk being carried off by the river to the sea. . . .

— THE END —

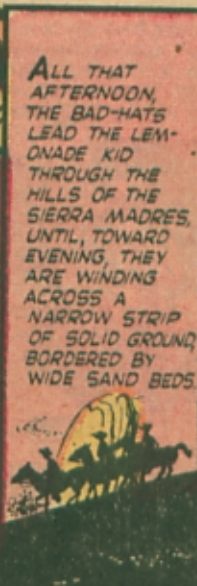
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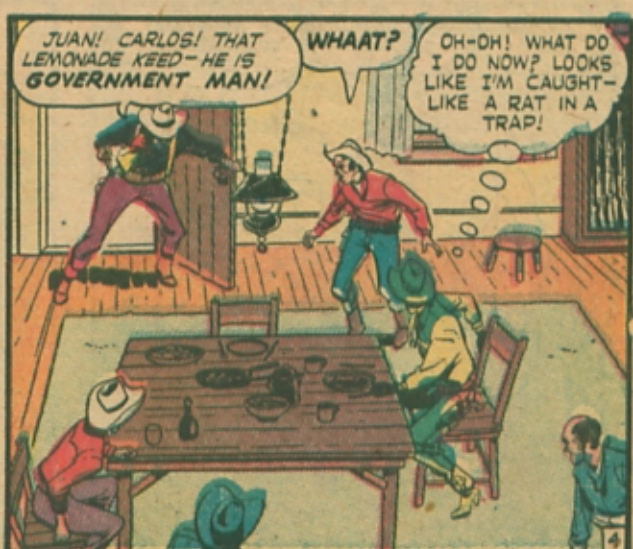
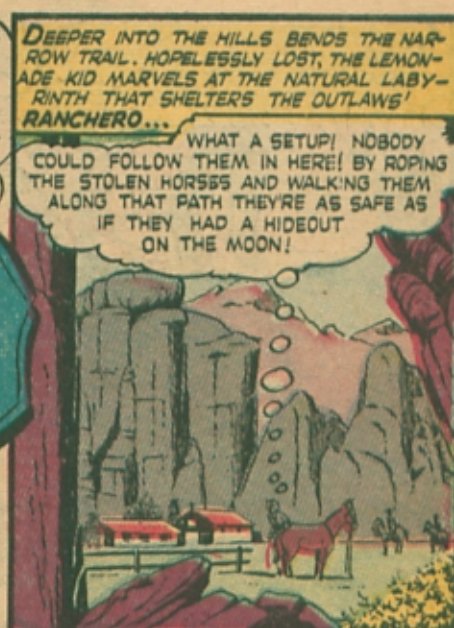
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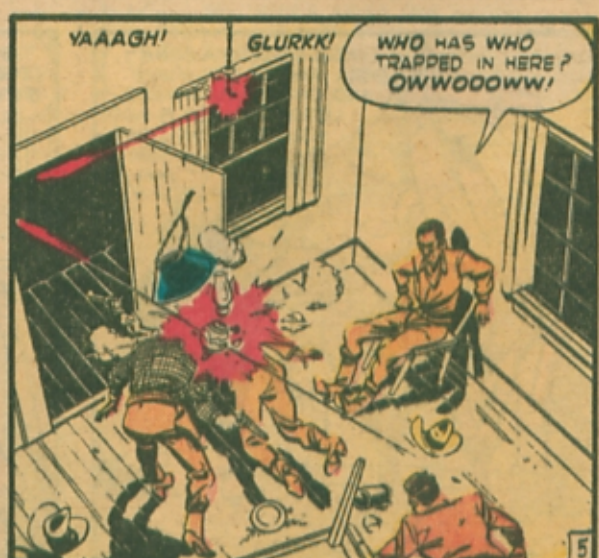
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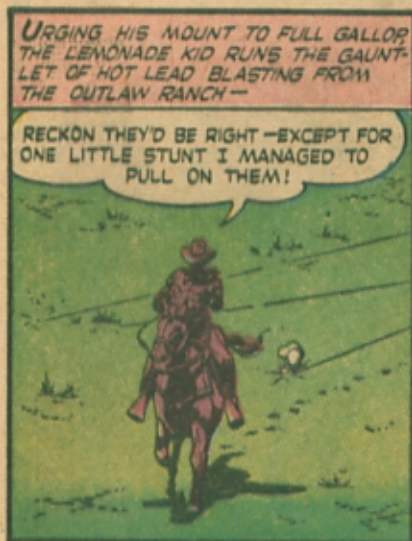
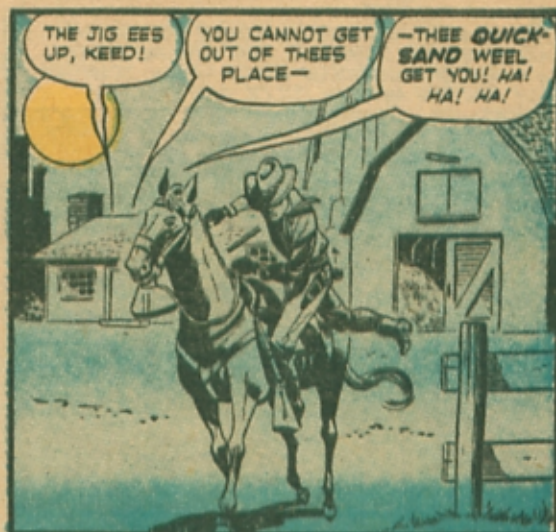
BOBBY BENSON'S B-BAR-B RIDERS



BOBBY BENSON'S B-BAR-B RIDERS



BOBBY BENSON'S B-BAR-B RIDERS



"WET" HORSES: HORSES RUSTLED VIA THE RIVER.

BOBBY BENSON'S B-BAR-B RIDERS

RIDING WITH DESPERATE SWIFTNESS, THE LEMONADE KID RACED THE DARKNESS...FOR WITH THE SUNRISE, HIS TRAIL OF PHOSPHORUS WOULD VANISH, TRAPPING HIM AND THE MEXICAN POLICE IN THE DEADLY QUICKSANDS...!



WE MADE IT!
THEY'RE INSIDE—!

CHARGE!
CHARGE THEM!



THE LEMONADE
KEED—WEETH
THEE POLICE!

WE
ARE
TRAPPED!

OUT-NUM-
BERED!



SURRENDER,
HOMBRE!

MANO MI! MY
HAND! HE SHOOTS
LIKE NOTHING
HUMAN!



I SAID—
SURRENDER!

GGGGNNYAAAA!



WITH THE COLD GUN BARRELS OF THE POLICE LOOKING INTO THEIR FACES, THE "WET-HORSE" GANG DROP THEIR GUNS. UP GO THEIR ARMS...

THEY KEEP THE STOLEN HORSES
IN HERE, HERNANDO! THEY MUST
BE ROPED AND WALKED OUT
OF THIS LABYRINTH.

DO NOT WORRY,
MY FRIEND! JUAN
HERE WILL BE ONLY
TOO HAPPY TO GUIDE
US SAFELY OUT
OF HERE—!



WON'T YOU,
JUAN?

SI, SI, SENOR! BUT FOR THE LOVE
OF HEAVEN—PUT THEE GUN
AWAY! I WEEEL DO ANYTHEENG
YOU ASK!



For exciting, real
outdoor action, you
can't beat these
topnotch western
comics . . . !



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3 PLAID SHIRT: Dark yoke, brilliant plaid body. Colors—black yoke, brown yoke, dark green yoke, with matching plaids.



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